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INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

REILLY TAR & CHEMICAL CORPORATION

TO: MR. R. J. BOYLE - INDIANAPOLIS OFFICE: St. Louis Park

FROM: H. L. Finch DATE: March 8, 1962

SUBJECT: PLANT PROPERTY - ST. LOUIS PARK

On March 5th, Mr. Yngve and myself again attended the public hearing on the proposed establishment of a Redevelopment Authority in the City of St. Louis Park. At the opening of the session, the Mayor stipulated that this was a continuation of the hearing of February 19th and called on members of the City staff to explain their reasons for the establishment of such an Authority. Mr. Ira Vraalstad, former head of the City Water Department, was called on to testify as to the water conditions in St. Louis Park. Mr. Vraalstad's testimony involved his recollection of the well digging operations. He explained the condition found in the drilling of their first well with the City's inability to use this well because of the odors received. Mr. Vraalstad described these odors as both phenolic in nature, with distinct odor of tar. He also went on to mention that on the recommendation of the well company, they cased the well through the dolomite layer as it was felt that the dolomite layer contained the water that was objectionable. It was further explained that even after sealing off the dolomite layer, the water continued to have a phenolic and tar odor, and by sealing off the dolomite layer, they were unable to pump a sufficient quantity of water from this well; therefore, the City abandoned the well.

The present Water Department engineer, Maynard Keyes, made several quotations from a report received from the State of Minnesota in about 1938 as the result of complaints the State Health Department had received about our apparent contamination of water supply. Mr. Keyes also made reference to phenolic odors and tar taste of the water. He brought up that in laying sewer pipe along Walker, they evidenced creosote penetration of the ground along Walker to a depth of ten feet.

We were not able to counter any of these statements but we might interject that it could be quite possible that there is a darkening of the soil to depths of ten feet along Walker Street. This is a very old street and has to be continually built up with the addition of gravel and fill as the street settles every year where it crosses the swamp adjoining our property. It is our opinion that a street to be kept in good condition in this area would have to be set on firm ground by digging out the peat underneath the street. This is the method which the State Highway used in crossing this area with Highway No. 7.

Mr. Thomas Blum, City Planner, testified that our plant was poorly located in reference to the City and pointed out the conditions of storm sewer drainage surrounding our area with the necessity of obtaining our area for redevelopment to increase commercial activity. Mr. Blum also pointed out his reasons for the extension of Louisiana Avenue through our property and over our lead trackage.

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The City road engineer (I did not note his name) read quite a lengthy dissertation on the problems involved in the construction of a road way so as to interchange Highway No. 7 and the railroad trackage south of our plant. There is so much involved in this report that I cannot recall the specifics as he did not take direct shots at our property.

The City health inspector also read quite a lengthy report, but in summary, his main idea was the prevention steps needed to halt a blighted condition from arising. Mr. McPhee pointed out several instances showing that blighted conditions existed in the City of St. Louis Park as far as health and sanitation were concerned. His report, although not completely favorable in the references made to our plant, was not strongly opposed and seemed to give me the impression that with continued work on our part, we should get along satisfactorily with the Health Department.

After hearing these statements, the councilmen asked very few questions of the staff and Mr. Wolfe opened the meeting to interested citizens, stipulating that those who have already been heard would not be recognized. Mr. Yngve, however, was given the opportunity to introduce anything new that he could add but was cautioned not to repeat what had already been said. Mr. Yngve was also not allowed to question the staff members. Mr. Yngve established quite a number of points and read from a \$50,000 survey of the City of St. Louis Park that pointed out quite conclusively that no blighted conditions existed in the City of St. Louis Park, and questioned the fact that the Council was again going to study it from a local level when they had already paid \$50,000 to have experts dig into the situation some years back. It was pointed out by Mr. Yngve the noticeable lack of any reference to a blighted condition existing around the Republic Creosoting Company area, or any mention of the Republic Creosoting Company as undesirable or a blighted area.

Several of the local citizens, members of the Parkview Improvement Association, interjected their agitation about the smoke and odors received from this plant. Each one of them mentioned the length of time they had lived in the Park and I believe the oldest complainer, living here since 1949, claimed to have suffered under the conditions of the plant since moving to St. Louis Park. As I recall, there were four or five of these people that got up with their complaints, one person in particular, mentioned the fact that we were cleaning our flues at the beginning of a run and, despite our contention that we no longer use the smoke stacks in the firing, he had seen volumes of smoke come out of those smoke stacks for about a fifteen minute interval late in the evening. It was also mentioned that we had increased our operation here in St. Louis Park, which was noticeable by the fact that we installed an additional high smoke stack at the west end of our property. He must have been referring to the installation of the new stack at the treating plant, and he complained now that there were additional sources of smoke coming from our location.

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